

July 2015 Health for Haiti Update

July 9, 2015

Professor Jen Musa posted this update recently on the [Health for Haiti blog](#):

It has been an eventful week and there are many Health for Haiti updates to share! A small summer Health for Haiti team spent a few days in Haiti this week to work on our existing projects and start some new ones. I was fortunate to travel and work with Jesse Campbell (a Chemical Engineer from Pall), Marcia Blackburn (Department of Communications and Media Art and Department of History, Philosophy and Social Sciences at SUNY Broome), my sister, Jean Rodgers (Johnson City Middle School), my dad, Tom Collart, and super 2015 Health for Haiti student Rachel Liddic. Rachel was already waiting for us in Haiti as part of a group of 6 (!) former Health for Haiti students who spent last week working in Haiti with Gina Curcio.

We planned to spend two days in Grande Saline to work on the water system, including some on the job training of our three Haitian water system operators, and to provide some programs for the children in the community. We were very excited to bring along uniform shirts for the children in the computer school, 100 beautiful dresses made by the ladies at Most Holy Rosary church, and the USB drives with the PowerPoint presentations made by the students at George F. Johnson Elementary School in Endicott, over 30 soccer and basketballs and many other donated items. In addition, Marcia had organized some art projects for the kids and we had some new computer literacy training to provide. So...we had a lot to do! Because it takes four hours to travel from Port au Prince to Grande Saline (and it is a rough four hours), we decided to spend one night in Saint Marc. This takes about two hours off of our trip. After our days in Grande Saline we spent a day in Port au Prince where we volunteered at Mother Teresa's Children's Hospital, visited Dr. Ken and Andrea at their amazing new clinic and community center, spent some time at Pastor Vincent's school in Cite Soleil and shared a wonderful afternoon with Pastor Vincent and the kids at their home.

We also expanded our Bridge to Haiti computer program and managed to get another 17 laptops to Haiti. We have now delivered more than 60 laptops to our computer literacy programs in Haiti!

Below are some pictures from the two days that we spent working with the kids in the church building in Grande Saline. On each day we had a few stations for the kids to visit. On the first day, the children worked on some art projects with Marcia, learned how to use their new USB drives to look at the PowerPoints made by the kids at GFJ, and received their new uniform shirt. It was very (very) hot but the kids immediately put on their shirts over their other clothes and when we arrived on day 2 they were waiting in the church in their new uniform. The uniform shirts have a logo designed by SUNY Broome Art of Science student Michele Wallen.



While some of us worked in the school, there was a lot going on at the water system. Jesse inspected the system and established a remote connection with the Pall team in Cortland. The team was able to monitor the system from their offices. There were some issues that needed to be fixed and Jesse walked the operators through the “clean in place” procedure. Tom designed a new intake valve to cut down on the amount of mud coming in with the water from the river. Jesse also brought Pall shirts and hats for the operators and they were very happy with their new uniforms. It was really amazing to see the people coming for water. People just kept coming all day!

We also spent some time in Cite Soleil. We brought five more laptops to Pastor Vincent's school in Cite Soleil, bringing the total number at that site to 20. The computer lab is a busy place, even in the summer. We all enjoyed spending time with Pastor Vincent and the kids. After our time at the school, we went to Pastor Vincent's house to spend some time with the kids. Marcia had some art projects for the kids to work on and we all had a great time.

It was a very busy and productive three days! We also made some plans for a few new projects. We hope to build a few bathrooms for the community. At this time, there are no bathrooms here at all, and now that there is clean water, we would like to improve sanitation. We have plans to build a couple of two room bathrooms. Each room will have two toilets so that parents can go in with their children. We will help to fund construction, but all of the materials will be purchased in Haiti and we will hire workers from the community. Members of the community will also work to maintain and clean the bathrooms.

We also hope to provide a dedicated classroom for the children. At this time the kids meet in the church, but the computers cannot stay there and the time that the space is available for classes is limited. If plans go well, we hope to have these things accomplished in time for our 2016 Health for Haiti class. The class can provide

education programs on bathroom hygiene and help to finish the new classroom.

Finally, we have a longer term goal to install solar power to run the water filtration system. This is a very big undertaking because the system requires a great deal of power. We are working with Jeff Smith from the Endwell Rotary to apply for a Rotary International Grant. To do this, we need to establish a partnership with a Rotary Club in Haiti. While in Saint Marc, Dr. Robinson and I met with Miss Pierre, president of the Saint March Rotary. We had a great meeting and we are taking the initial steps to establish our partnership.

Thank you to everyone who donated items for our trip. Thank you to Jesse, Tom, Marcia, Jean and Rachel for your amazing efforts, for bouncing on a hard crowded bench in the hot dusty truck for hours and hours, and for strengthening our clean water and education projects. Thanks to JJ for driving, keeping us safe, and translating for us. Thanks to Kenny and Schneider for your help with translation and to Jude and Barbara for your hospitality at our home in Haiti.

We are now accepting applications for the 2016 class! Please consider joining our efforts in Haiti. Orevwa!

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